

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6 have been amended to better define the claimed invention. New claims 7-19 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. The amended/new claims find solid support in the original specification and the drawings. For example, amended claim 1 finds support in original claim 1, original claim 5, and the disclosure of the original description in lines 8 to 10 on page 9. Amended claim 5 finds support in the original description in lines 14 to 16 on page 8. In addition to the amendment of claim 5, claim 6 has also been amended to depend on amended claim 1. New claim 7 finds support in the original descriptions in lines 6 to 11 on page 7, and in lines 24-26 on page 9. New claim 8 finds support in the original description in lines 11 to 21 on page 9. New claim 9 finds support in the original description in lines 22 to 24 on page 9. New claim 10 finds support in the description in lines 4 to 6 on page 9. Original claims 2-4 have been revised to improve claim language. New claims 11-19 find support in at least Figs. 4-5 of the application as filed. The specification has been slightly revised to be consistent with the drawings. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The Examiner's rejection of claims 1-6 as being obvious over *Parish* (U.S. Patent No. 5,156,250) is noted.

Parish discloses a liquid diverter for a currently receiver positioned adjacent to a slot, wherein the liquid diverter has a top member and a bottom member, the top member including ribs, the bottom member including apertures, wherein a curvilinear surface matches the curves of ribs provided in the bottom member interposed between the apertures. In this known liquid diverter any liquid entering the liquid diverter through the inlet opening is directed downwardly to the apertures

and curvilinear surface provided in the top member functions to diver liquid entering the inlet opening back towards the inlet opening to further prevent liquid from entering the slot. See Abstract and Figs. 3 and 7.

The Examiner stated in the office action that the difference between the present invention and the one disclosed by Parish is whether or not it is for a gaming machine or a vending machine, and then concluded that the original claims are obvious over Parish. Although Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's rationale, claim 1 has nevertheless been amended to avoid Parish. In particular, Parish does not teach or suggest the configuration of the first open end being governed by the bill guide plate and guiding foreign matter entering via the openings, and a second open end connected to the first open end and being opened downwards as now recited in amended claim 1. Thus, amended claim 1 is patentable over Parish et al. In addition, since claims 2 to 18 are dependent on claim 1, these claims are patentable as well.

The dependent claims are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art, as will be apparent to the Examiner upon reviewing these claims.

For example, as to claims 7-9, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed manners in which the mounting member and bill guide plate are fixed to each other and/or to the door.

As to claim 10, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed tapered passage. See e.g., Figs. 7 and 11 of *Parish*.

As to claims 5 and 11, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest that the upper surfaces of the partition members are disposed below the top surface of the bill guide plate. As can be seen in Figs. 3 and 10 of *Parish*, the upper surfaces of the partition members are flush with the top surface of the bill guide plate.

As to claims 12-19, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed slot bottom walls which extend along the slots without completely closing them. As can be seen in Fig. 4 of *Parish*, there are no bottom walls at all.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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